

Winter 2022

The Catch



It'se-ye-ye // *Acrylic on Canvas* // By Cadence Moffitt

tracks

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Happy New Year to All,

Welcome back to *The Catch*, Cordova's literary & arts quarterly. It has been a gorgeous, powdery, clear skies winter here in Cordova. Doubtless we've all been out making tracks of our own and observing those of others. As ever, a royal show of admiration is due to our contributing artists & writers: **THANK YOU** for leaving your tracks with *The Catch* and for making this publication whole. To our community of readers: Please tread often and be inspired.

See you in the Spring!

With Love & Gratitude,
Jillian Gold
Editor



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

To be featured in our **Spring** issue. The theme is

Submissions are due by March 15th

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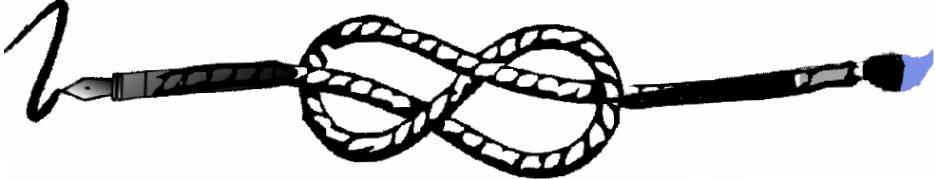
ALL AGES. ALL MEDIUMS. NO ENTRY LIMIT.

DISCLAIMER

The submissions in this publication exclusively reflect the views and opinions of the participating artists and do not, in any way, represent the views or opinions of the city or its members.

While some profanities have been edited (with writer permissions), there is occasional use of forceful language in this publication.
Please exercise reader discretion.

Seasonal Catch



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Fields & Forests

By Morgan DeLaet

Our life is a path
following the tracks
laid by the people
from way back

All tracks are unique
float across open fields
stutter through pitch-black never-ending forests
travel to the same place
with welded iron shields
straightaways,
bends,
a stoplight
for life to make sure you're alright

Tracks are all connected
on the railroad path of life.

Just the Beginning

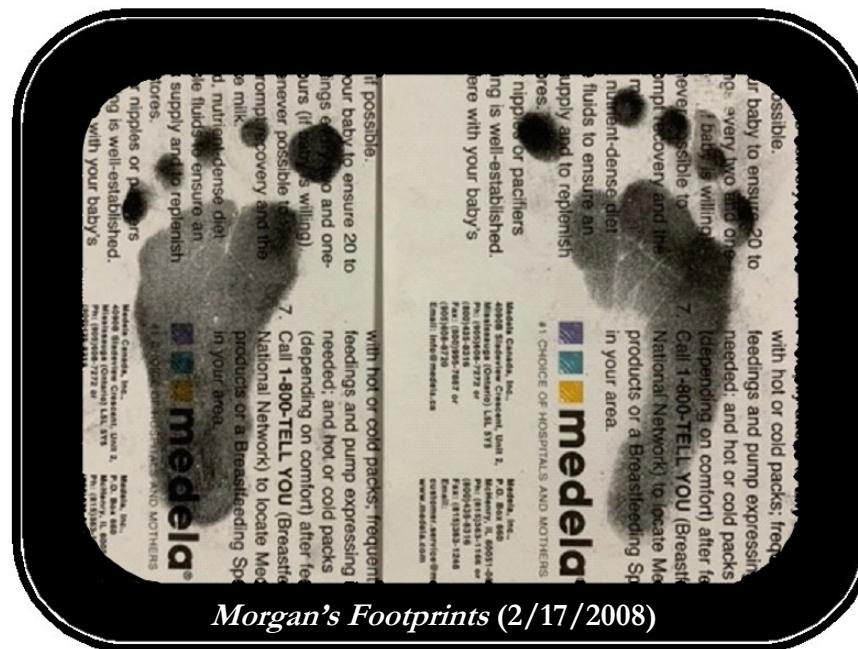
By Lisa DeLaet

Baby feet ink
On birth day
First steps
Church floor
Squeaky shoes
Toddler waddle
Flutter kicks
Learning to swim
Up on toes
In pink tights
Basketball shoes
Gym floors
Jazz shoes
Stage floor
Feet dangle next to mom
Holding baby brother first time
Sneakers
Bikes and playgrounds
Dress shoes
Band concerts
Bare feet
Lyrical dance
Skates
Clear Ice

Foot prints
Heart prints
Tracks for miles
Across oceans, mountains, and friendships
Michigan, Alaska, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, and back to Alaska

Each step with a ripple effect

Just the beginning





Photograph By Teal Barmore

Making Tracks

By Oshiana Black

Young one, with breezy ideas
Swerve your thoughts like a strobe
Into the jovial space beyond
Bend them like light beams
Angles of infinite particles
Glinting, evaporating into a single joyous stream
Your world is yours, but you're part of me.
It's like my heart doubled in size and half jumped ship and became you, your own person.
From the corners of your eyelids
Your sense of fun and kindness illuminates my life, and those around you, your lightness and love
I'm humbled by the honor, overwhelmed at times
Each minuscule day, an eternity
Re-channel those same paths, let's take a different way together.
With fingers sifting sand, detour from rabbit hole of no return
Look to you, young one, and feel for round bits of beach glass amongst the rocks.



Mixed Media By Runa Mae Kocan // Age 5

Fit Into Your Tracks

By Rebecca J. Martin

I dream I follow in your footsteps,
fit into your tracks, transform to be you for a day.

Below borealis streamers, snowshoe hare's
breath steaming, flat feet fly
through misty flakes, outsmarting red fox
this time, leaving behind an impression on crystal like
Christmas ornaments to hang on evergreen.

Still, fox leans forward, lifts and sniffs the stiff wind
to select aromas of new prey.
Then dashes off. His trace remains as
symmetric claw prints above sparkling diamond shapes
pressed upon the blizzard's aftermath.

Tremble at a triple talons touchdown
where great horned owl's wings swept away
snow in swift chase revealed by a shallow indentation trench.
While little raccoon paw prints like a child's hands
moved by mindfully direct to the river flow.



Photograph By David Lynn Grimes

Grey

By Steve Schoonmaker — *F/V Saulteur*

It's a blending that way on a canvas of grey
From the palette of colors in creation of day
Contributions of light, to the mysteries of grey

A composition designed for a canvas undefined
Left up to the Sky, and its palette's response
From the Sea, wheeling the colors continuously
In the purified rinse of the watershed Streams
Rinsed from the blue
 through the brown and the green
Gravitationally painting with the soil and the trees
Growing in the mists of the glacier's retreat
Grinding down mountains for the grey of the Sea

It composes with me
On a canvas undefined, it composes with tide
All of it water and all of it Sky
Sun beams to the Moon reflects to the night
In the temporal colors that change with the light
The color wheel spins, and a rainbow ignites
In its arc through the spray on a palette of grey
In the thousands of words that a painting can say

I lay my whole gillnet while the paint is still wet
As wild salmon enter from the edge of the frame
And then enter the web of my net
Silver sides, blue-backed, white bellies beneath
My paint brush, my instincts, and incoming breeze
Reacting the surfaces to a bright shimmering

The painter myself, but not really me
With an artistic eye, a composition designed
For a canvas undefined, left up to the Sky
And its palette's response from the Sea
Wheeling the colors continuously
If is as should be, related to composition
And I'm able to see, my paint brush turns
Around and starts painting in me

It's a blending that way on a canvas of grey
An often-wet painting that's never the same
Way beyond borders that conceptual frames
Down cork lines to bright buoys contrasting the bay
On a canvas of grey, the patterns repeat
With the red-fleshed fillets of the salmon I eat
On the stove at the source of the boat cabin's heat
My paintbrush turns around and starts
Painting in me . . . and gratefully

It's a blending that way on a canvas of grey
This painting that's never complete

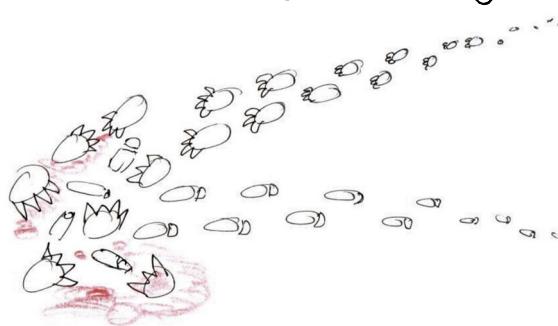


Photograph By Chris Byrnes

A True Story

Artwork & Concept

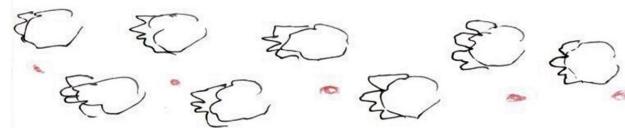
Two tracks converge in a snowy scene...



By Sergei Bogatchev

Words By Jillian Gold

...One set remains where once two had been.



Dare I follow . . . ?

(continues on next page)



Channel Fever

By Riley Howard

Almost home, almost home.
Two bourbons down on a flight from Nome.
The where and when will always change, but the feelings felt will stay the same.
Whether weathering, through a swell, or traversing down an earthly hell.
The channel fever is something real.
It's that which very few will feel.
Adventure's not a thing sought out.
It's what goes wrong that it's about.
Make a living. See some things.
Make connections. Human beings.
Finish right, pack the bags.
The time it seems it always lags.
Channel fever through the sticks.
The clock it ticks and talks and ticks.
Time moves slow, but that's okay.
Carpe diem. Seize the day.
Light is dwindling, waters low.
The boat will run. The wind will blow.
Plane's going down, through its descent, and I think of places never went.
Save that for another time.
There's no reason, but there's rhyme.
Almost home, almost home.
Touching down on a flight from Nome.

Haiku

By Rebecca J. Martin

Misinformation...

how not to be lost in fog?

You know “tracks don’t lie.”



Photograph By Arlene Rosenkrans

The Crab Thief

By Gerald *Pieface* Masolini

The theme for this go-round of *the Catch* is “tracks”. When you think about it, there are quite a few kinds of tracks around Cordova. I chose to write about a track seldom seen . . . thankfully . . . the track of a crab thief.

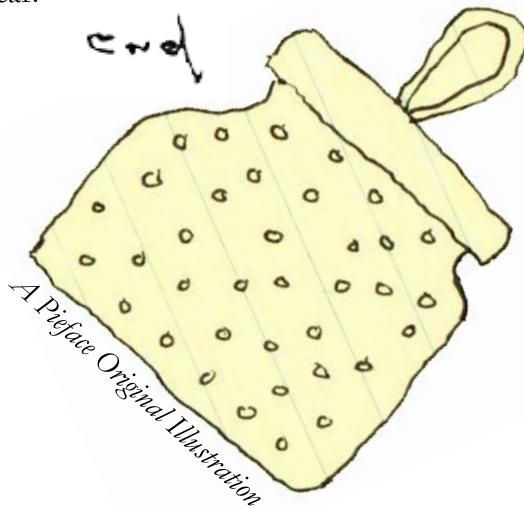
Cordova’s Tanner Crab fishery started up in the early seventies. Tanners had never been commercially fished before, so it was all experimental. I think even the name was experimental because now in the big wide world, which is our crab market, the consumers call them *Snow Crabs*. “Snow” sounds more luring to a potential customer than “Tanner”. Processors experimented with new ideas. Fishermen tried a variety of gear. Fish and Game scrambled for a workable management plan. I was a young punk kid then, and I wanted to take part in this crab excitement, even though the offered price was only 13½ cents per pound. I got lucky and ended up as a deckhand/cook on a boat whose skipper I suspected was going to be a top producer once the fishery got under way. We just called him the *Old Man*.

There was lots and lots of work before we started fishing, getting the boat and gear ready, and the Old Man didn’t tolerate anything but top quality work. We had 150 pots (traps) and the goal was to make all of them identical. This was very important; we intended to pull those pots as fast as we could, and the last thing we wanted was a big surprise granny knot zooming up on the line, getting stuck in the block (line puller), wasting our time. Every crew made their own bait jars. Since the fishery was so new, you couldn’t buy ready-made jars – 3 jars per pot – heavy duty plastic quarts. We drilled many small holes -- big enough to let bait (chopped herring) smells out, but that’s all. The Old Man was very watchful that every jar was identical and hung in the pot in just the right spot for distribution of bait smells.

One day, two of three years into the Tanner era, we were out in the Gulf, pulling pots. By now it had become a smooth routine (even enjoyable). We were getting 12 to 15 crabs per pot, when up comes a pot with only 3 or 4 crabs. The Old Man, being up in the wheelhouse looking down, spotted this immediately. And just as fast he saw an out-of-place bait jar . . . worse yet, it wasn’t even ours. When a dog gets ready to fight, its ears lay back. I don’t think the Old Man’s ears moved, but he had *grrrr* written all over his face. We deck apes knew not to say a word. The thief tracks were unmistakable. Evidently one of thief’s crew, out of habit, without thinking, had grabbed one of our bait jars and replaced it with a fresh thief-made jar.

We finished out that string of pots and headed for town. The whole mood of the boat had deteriorated. Nobody said much. We knew something bad was going to happen. The Old Man could be the nicest guy in the world, or your worst nightmare if you were caught stealing his crabs. Back in town we directly went over and tied to the thief’s boat. The Old Man jumped on board and entered that boat without calling or knocking. Several minutes passed. We crew members remained on our boat . . . quiet. We were expecting to hear sirens or see blood or whatever else a crab thief might have coming. Instead the Old Man returned, no blood on his knuckles, looking a bit calmer. We went to the cannery and sold our crabs. And never once did he mention that incident . . .

. . . And never again did that thief leave tracks on our gear.





Big Foot & Sasquatch By Lethie // Age 9

Brutus Jocosus

By Jillian Gold

I stumbled and prowled,
following lead of your tracks.
My tummy growled hollow;
You were feeding on snacks.
So long since I'd crunched on
leafy, fresh greens . . .
What's wrong?! It stopped munching.
Eep! I'd been seen!
I was freaked and frozen and
so totally scared.
I squeaked one dozen words
with what courage I dared.

I'll leave if you want, sir . . . There's no need to end me.
And believe it or not, the monster was friendly!
Some creatures seem scary,
With features so hairy . . .
But just get to know them,
And write them a poem!

*Oh, Brutus Jocosus! How astute your nose is!
Without a doubt, your clever snout exposes sprouts.*



Mixed Media By Jillian Gold



Big Foot By Silas // Age 12

A Studio Visit

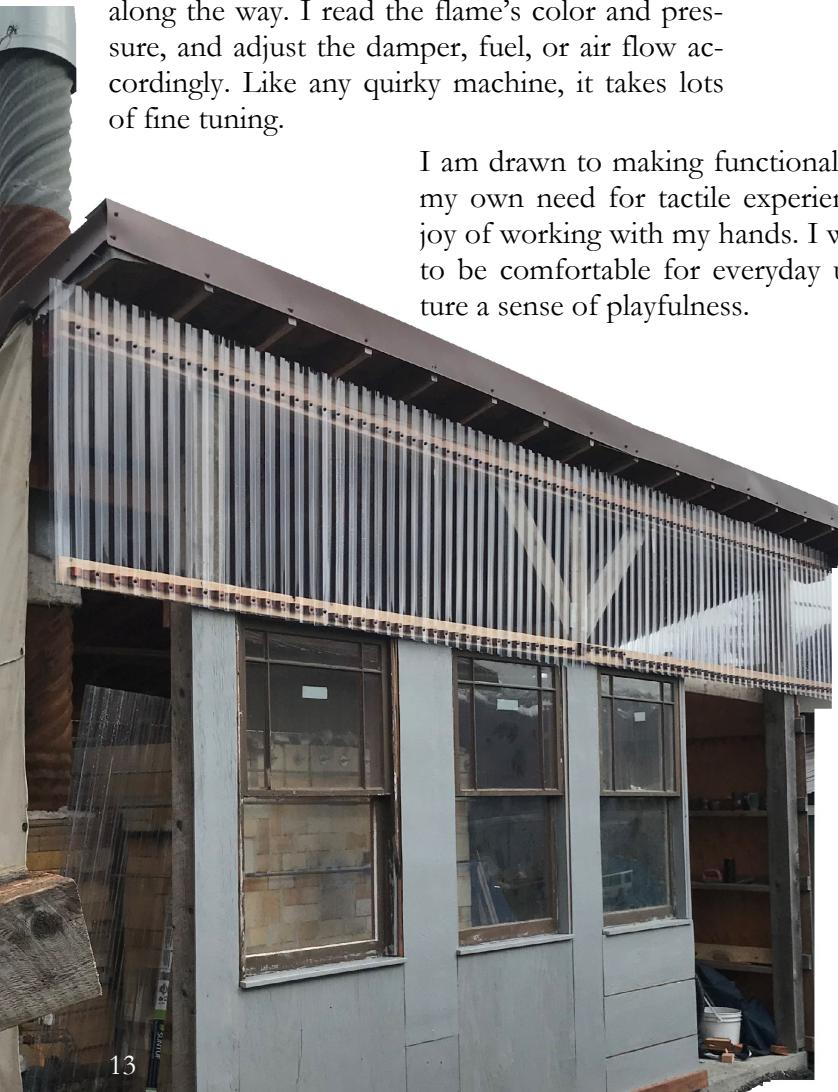
With Jenny Nakao

I could have bought a decent car after the 2015 Prince William Sound seine season, but instead I bought a used kiln. I used to say I was “fishing for pots” as I spent each year’s gillnet and seine crew shares on my pottery studio equipment. First it was the kiln, then land to put the kiln on, and then a structure to house it. It took about three seasons to get it put in place, and much like a car, this kiln got me to where I wanted to go.

Housed in a three-walled pole barn with a cement floor, my kiln is a bulky 6x5x7 feet. The cement floor was key since one of my kiln’s main functions is to roll its loading cart out on tracks like a train. That means I can load the kiln while standing upright instead of crouched inside. When I’m done loading, I simply roll the cart back into the kiln for firing.

The kiln’s flame is used to reach 2300° F and create a reduction atmosphere. Forced-air burners hooked up to propane tanks shoot flames through the kiln in a down draft motion. They eat up bits of oxygen in the glaze and clay along the way. I read the flame’s color and pressure, and adjust the damper, fuel, or air flow accordingly. Like any quirky machine, it takes lots of fine tuning.

I am drawn to making functional ceramics by my own need for tactile experiences and the joy of working with my hands. I want my pots to be comfortable for everyday use and capture a sense of playfulness.



*Look for Jenny on
F/V Zephyr.*

*See more of her work
on Instagram:
(@jennynakao)*



Trails of Tracks to Follow

By Rebecca J. Martin

Whitshed Equisetum // Photo By Arlene Rosenkrans

In White Sands, now New Mexico, a young woman tenderly set down her barefoot toddler for a moment one day, after rains stopped, nearly 23 thousand years ago, so it's believed. While other children ran through the soggy bog alongside a lake nearby - imagine them smiling. Like she had played when her grandmother watched over. Then, they went on their way, dreaming of new destinations, admired by the Milky Way, fed by hunters whose superb tracking meant survival.¹

Those ancient people followed billions of birds a squawking rainbow of color traveling the Pacific Flyway from Alaska south, and, had no idea that 70 million years earlier, three-toed Theropod monsters, ten feet high, cast stealthy shadows of terror across the plains near Mount Denali's Igloo Creek. A nine by six-inch footprint of imbedded sediment recalls the presence of one such polar dinosaur – carnivore – whose ancestors lumbered across Beringia to dwell in 'dawn redwood' forests.²

Past towering metasequoia canopies stretched majestically overhead, nurturing abundant lime green ferns, golden ginkgoes, emerald cycads. While the elegant spore-producing horsetail, four hundred million years existent, remains on earth today a *living fossil*. Its tough slender stalks once used to scour Scottish pots and its even spaced pattern between nodes recalls John Napier's keen eye to define logarithmic logic³ while it remains resilient in muddy marshes, we marvel at trails of tracks to follow.

¹Carl Zimmer. "Ancient Footprints Push Back Date of Human Arrival in the Americas" *New York Times*, Sep. 23, 2001.

²"Discovery of Dinosaur Tracks in Denali." National Park Service. 2005.

³"Horsetails, The Genus Equisetum" Milne Library. *Inanimate Life*, George C. Briggs.

Calls

By Steve Schoonmaker — *F/V Saulteur*

Calls the morning

Let's begin

Calls a magpie

To its kin

Calls a creek's mouth

Fish backs fin

Calls to struggle

Calls to win

Calls to centers

Wound inside

Calls to weather

Calls to tide

Hear a raptor's

Calls to hide

Hear the calling

Calls have cried

What's there unfound

It calls to find

Its calls can join

A land and mind

As rain recalls

The rivers wind

Recalls this thing

I can't define

Along the roads

The people speed

Ride their waves

Of fertile seed

Where sprouts a flood

To endless need

Where life's a dance

To High Tech's lead

Along the edge

That caves away

Was once the path

That didn't stray

Was once the path

That brought today

Along the edge

The calls replay

(continues on next page)



By Runa Mae Kocan // Age 5

Where Giant Moon's
Call to wane
Calls Coyote's
Yipped refrain
Calls the mountain
Calls the Seas
Calling deserts
Calling trees
The call is heard
It's nature's way
If there's a place
It calls today
And we respond
To work or play
For wild we are
Just gone astray
It calls the wild
It calls the tame
To places like
From where we came
Once any place
That you could name
It calls the human
Just the same

Calls frost to form
On evening's dew
And Birds across
The oceans blue
Calls Bees to land
Where pollens grew
And Hawks to soar
The thermals too
Where callings leave
The tracks of paws
The calls themselves
Direct the laws
The calls reach out
To leaves and claws
The calls reach out
Without a pause
Where fossils mark
The passer by
What's called to life
Is called to die
If called to swim
Or called to fly
What's left to call
Will always try.

Cold Pizza with eggplant

By Greg Mans

Snow fell in heavy flakes.

We sat near the fire wearing snowmobile suits and warm hats.

The pizza was cold but sweet with eggplant and good.

The Buddha statue's head was split open and served as a cup holder for wine.

Red hot coals cut the 4" rounds in half.

We flipped the ends of the logs back into the fire when they finally burnt through and broke.

Smoke swirled in circles and into our eyes and faces,

The air blew in cold and clean and with big flakes of snow,

This was the beginning and end of our time.

"The elders," she said.

"It is the elders that paved the way. . .We are riding on their work."

She was referring to the glowing red and hot of the base coals,

Those coals that took each damp unsplit log we set and worked them to a point of fire.

She was referring to the circle.

We stared at the hot and red,

Heating the bottle of wine by setting it too near the flame and forgetting,

Drinking it warm.

Wondering of those before us,

Of their true tests and trials and hunger,

Of their strength and persistence,

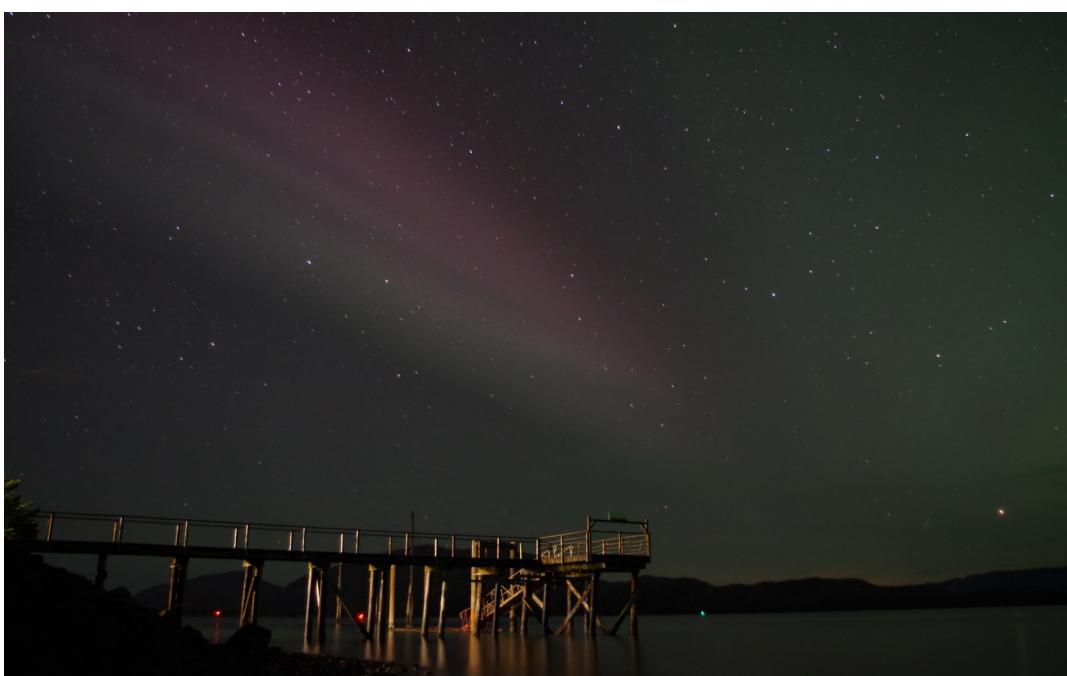
Of their love and joy and hope.

Wondering of our place in this time.

Thankful for each other.

This moment of smiling faces lit by firelight

Against the dark and cold of night.



Light Tracks // Photo By Chris Byrnes

Tracks in the Past . . .

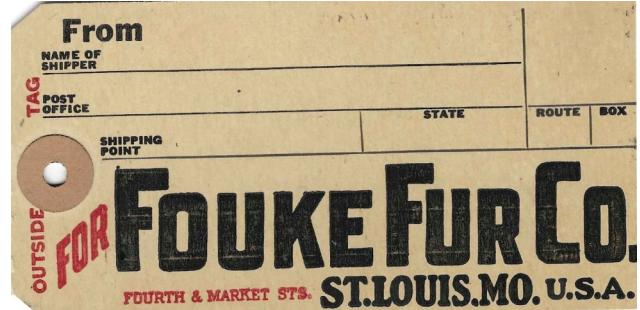
By Cathy Sherman

The theme of *tracks* for the Quarterly Issue had me thinking about the tracks in the snow we see each winter when we hike, ski, snowshoe, and bike out on the Copper River Delta. I have been learning the tracks of winter with the help of my husband, Dixon. He and his friend Marvin Van den Broek are occasional trappers, and it is a healthy form of subsistence living.

This made me dig deeper into the files of the Cordova Historical Society to learn more about the history of trapping in our area. I don't really want to delve into the political, social and safety issues of trapping but look at it from a past perspective when it was relied upon for sustenance and as an economic driver.

I recently read a publication from 1980 called, "The Alaska Perspective" published by the Alaska Historical Commission. It was authored by the talented UAF professor William Schneider who started Alaska's oral history program. His final conclusions in the paper¹ are worth repeating here:

A) "There is a subsistence lifestyle which often involves trapping. When Natives and a considerable number of non-Natives who have been raised in the North are living a subsistence lifestyle which involves trapping they are: 1) returning to an area where they have trapped with parents or other relatives; 2) combining traditional skills and modern technology; 3) selling the fur to a trader, fur buyer, or fur company for cash; 4) using the cash for many things, some related to subsistence, some not; 5) recognized in the community for their success in trapping because trapping is considered important for people to do in winter.



B) *Trapping has always involved an exchange, first for goods then for cash. In some areas, for almost 100 years cash has been a part of the trapping economy. Cash is a necessary part of life in rural Alaska and cannot be divorced from the subsistence economy.*

C) *Trapping for exchange, first goods then cash has been a strong acculturative force from the prehistoric to the present. It has influenced settlement, yearly cycle, clothing, diet, and other aspects of life. The quest for furs has focused international attention on Alaska and continues to shape the history of the state. Unlike many acculturative forces, trapping offers the opportunity for individuals to maintain an intimate tie with the land and to still acquire cash necessary for livelihood.*

D) *Trapping is attractive to many newcomers to the North, in part because they feel trapping provides a chance for self-sufficiency and because they identify with an activity which has some historic depth."*

Tracks, so much more than the paths we leave behind. Tracks are sustenance, entertainment, educational tools, story tellers, even art.



*Fur Shipping c/o Invoice Tags
from the collection of
the Cordova Historical Society*

¹ William Schneider. "Trapping Furbearer In Alaska: A Legacy And, Perhaps A Destiny!" *Alaska in Perspective*, Vol. III, No. 1, 1980.

Tracks Everywhere

By Hasan Bowman // *Age 8*

In winter hare tracks

In summer you see bear tracks

And always your tracks



Alaganik Beartrack // Photo By Arlene Rosenkrans



Photograph By Teal Barmore

My Favorite Sounds of the Ski Hill

By Sierra Westing

There are lots of sounds that please me

but nothing more than the sounds
of the Ski Hill.

The "Buzzzzing" of the chair lift sliding across its wire

along with the "Whoosh" of a jump

landed on an extreme powder day

with a clack of poles

Accompanying it at the end.

Ahhhhhhhhh!

The beautiful sounds of the Ski Hill.



Photograph By Rob Ammerman

So Much Snow

By Rob Ammerman

In snowshoes, we traipse over wintery depths
To a stove-heated cabin, in icicles dressed.
A valley of white that's steeped on all sides
By frozen icefalls and blueberry skies.

Never has there been so much snow.

We seek shelter from the impending cold,
The tracks of our parents have met with the old.
They crossed frozen rivers, spanned wilderness.
Carried their burdens on well-trodden quests,
Found hints of foundation, whispers, success.
Right now, we're searching for that makeshift nest.

Never has there been so much snow.

Spruce trees piled to their earliest branches,
The heart of the winter, darkness advances.
How far can we walk while taking these chances?
How long can we trudge over endless expanses?

Thoughts start as snowflakes,
And snowball down hillsides.
An avalanche covers the tracks.
The cold that we know settles in,
Afraid for the skins on our backs.
We're overexposed, in chest-deep snows,
Fighting the frost on the tips of our toes.

Broad daylight gets dim and the air's feeling thin.
Marching toward bunks and down mummy bags,
The kerosene sloshes. Our hopefulness sags.

How easy it would be to hunker down.
Set sled on fire under a pine tree's crown.
Get lost in surviving, stay close to the ground.
The dog's digging holes and turning around.

Never has there been so much snow.

(continues on next page)

We seek out the quiet places.
Trudge through pure and simple spaces.
Silence helps return our graces.

And though,
we slow,
to ponder.

How might
it be
to stop?

Blazing trail, where trail must be.
Carved out, though one can't see.
Keep walking, being ferried.
In the powder, the tracks are buried.

Never has there been so much snow.

A step here, a step there.
The cabin dwells in mountain air
Alpenglow horizon tends
Clouds and wisps round jagged bends
Peaks to pink and peach.
Warmth within our reach.

Peace above
and love below.
Never has there been

So
much
snow.



Acrylic on Canvas By Sam Bair



Photograph By Teal Barmore

One Day on the Ski Hill

By Leif Solberg // *Age 8*

Skiing through the powder, doing
silent curves down Chili Dog, down Hidden.
Now, down Towers. Down from the
Ridge, covered in Fluffy snow.
Jumping off cliffs.
Down Chili Dog, down Hidden,
down Towers, now down Dark Side too.
Not only Wall and Mumbo, but Tea Cup too!

Powder

By Peter Solberg // *Age 11*

Grit trucks drive
and people slide.
Powder runs from top to bottom.
The cat cuts it fine.
Dipping into Teacup
and out on to Towers.
Full of jumps and
landing in a cloud of powder.

Dear Self,

By Jillian Gold

Allow me to lose myself in this page
And surface
At the core of a canvas
As a dot in a reservoir
Framed by muskeg and mountains
Then sky.

I am a line now
Separate from those ones
Under discipline's wide rule
Stacked twenty-seven high

I am blade-narrow and cutting
Through the center
Halving this pool as I make my way
To the surrounding shore
Shin bumping rock,
I step up
The water reclaiming its wholeness
So completely still if not for me

I watch it
Bend to wind's force
To the whims of plunging children
I watch it
Always returning to its pristine calm

Even as my toes are moved
To repeatedly submerge
And urge ripple
Like the child's arm purposefully
And just barely
Brushing against the form of
Grandma's perfectly molded *Jello*

All of it a marvel.
And how lucky we are
To touch it.
Taste it.

As it waves under foot
And jiggles on the platter
We are at play

With the brightest magnitudes

Beauty is a gift.
Nature is the truth.
Let me conduct myself
Humbly,
Gratefully,
And with Love
Always,



Photograph By Arlene Rosenkrans

The Shepherd's Song

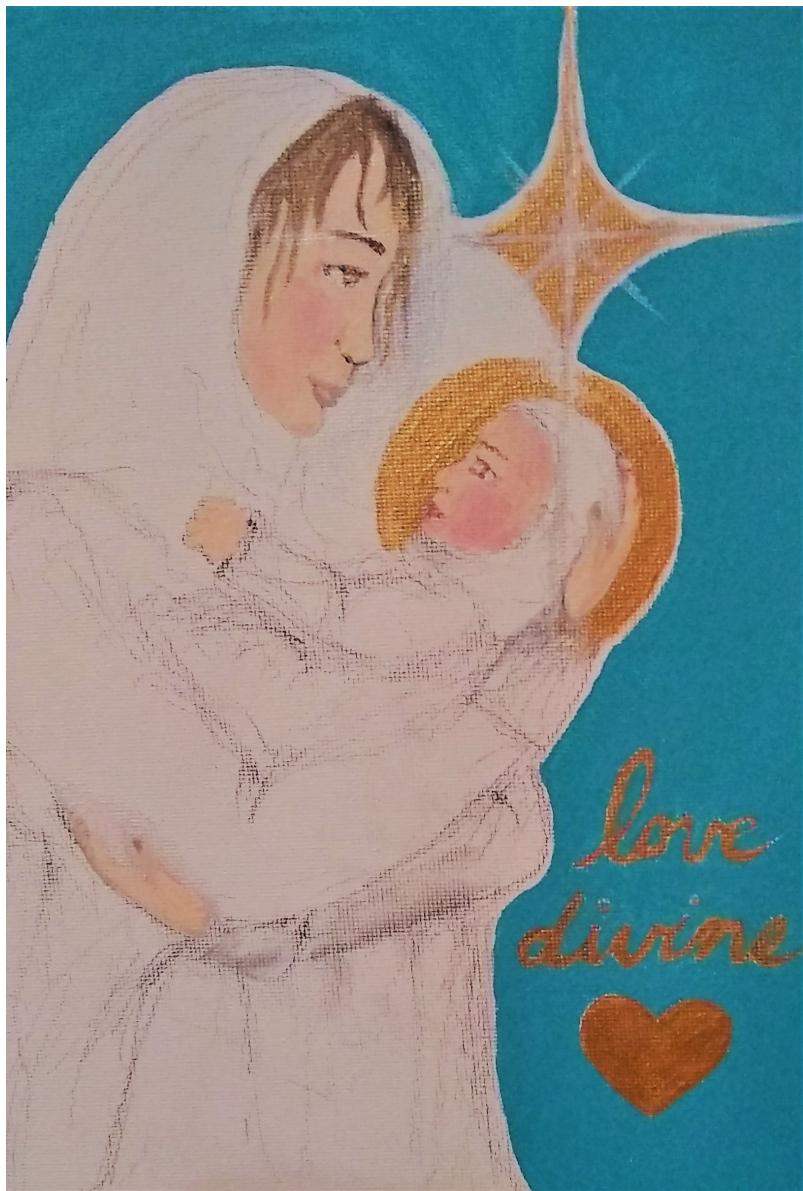
By Cristina Vican

In the golden glow of firelight
I see my companions faces flickering in my sight
My fingers stiff from cold

Shepherd have I been all my life
Untethered without family or wife
My mind is silent pure

The sheep sleep beneath the clear open sky
I lift my eyes and express a soundless sigh
The starry joy is not lost to my heart

A radiance glows bright and brighter in the sky
A being, a messenger from on high
I am dazzled, mute, transported



Pencil & Acrylic on Canvas By Cristina Vican

This precious angel speaks, whispers to my mind
An utterance blessedly buoyant beyond space time
We are held in Eternity

Then, all at once, the whole sky alight like flame
Multitudes, "Glory to God in the Highest!" the song came
"And Peace on Earth"

Magnificent delight filled my heart that night
A precious child in a manger, to the world, a light
To live knowing this wonder each moment is
The Present of Christmas

In Search of Aum

By Jeanie Gold

Harmonizing voice of Spirit,
Ever-present celestial song,
Inaudible to mortal ears.

Source and Sustainer
Hiding in plain sight,
Invisible to mortal eyes.

Cosmic vibration,
Sacred sound of Infinity,
Animating, enlivening.

Beyond bodily perception.
Beyond mental comprehension.

Breathing my breath,
Pulsing my pulse,
Sing louder to me, please.

For I am in search of Thee.

Sitting in quiet-stillness
With eyes closed,
Mind turned inward.

With reverence
And with gratitude,
Seeking Your presence.

Day after day,
Practicing, listening,
Striving to come closer.

Indwelling troubadour,
Wellspring of my soul
Show me how to find You.

Sing louder to me, please
For I am in search of Thee.

Aum, Peace, Amen.



Photograph By David Saiget

The Numen of the Womb

By Tamara Filipović

“The white fathers told us, I think therefore I am; and the black mothers in each of us – the poet – whispers in our dreams, I feel therefore I can be free.” - Audre Lorde (1985)

“All of that’s got to be true, because it’s true in the body.” – Dr. Koko Zauditu-Selassie (2021)

Now in my 30s
it is true what they say about the biological clock
there is an urgency inside of me
not for babies
but the fertility of wisdom
the yearning to reconnect to
the womb’s sacred void

Track I. Language

She said, “You are remembering”
when I told her what I was reading and discovering
the power of the divine feminine
the protection of Her wild grace

With only a quiet intention inspired by Rumi:

“Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray.”

one by one,
the alphabet of the language I longed for appeared

Tracks set down by

Arundhati Roy	Audre Lorde	Alice Walker	China Galland
Clarissa Pinkola Estés	Jamie Sams	Janelle Monae	Jean Shinoda Bolen
Joy Harjo	Judith Simmer-Brown	Koko Zauditu-Selassie	Lilith Dorsey
Lisa See	Marija Gimbutas	Merlin Stone	Nina Simone
Robin Wall Kimmerer	Susan Griffin	Toni Morrison	Wilma Mankiller

I followed where their tracks led
a reflection of so much I had felt into
now encouraged beyond all doubt

(continues on next page)

Track II. Place

There is a yearning for physical places too
sacred portals of this felt remembering

She said, “Our feet are what connects us to Mother Earth’s body”
a source of energetic exchange

So, I intend to find, and feel my feet,
where Her numen arises into physical form

Tracks found in

Vinča, Serbia	Lepenski vir, Serbia	Medjugorje, Bosnia & Herzegovina	Zadar, Croatia	Thessaly, Greece
Częstochowa, Poland	Marian shrines, Worldwide	Goddess temples, India	Częstochowa, Poland	Sacred Neolithic sites, Worldwide
Kyoto, Japan	Jeju Island, South Korea	Kathmandu, Nepal	Canyon de Chelly, USA	New Orleans, USA

Track III. Inheritance

She said, “You can use the anchor of your body or your breath”
while I closed my eyes and traveled within
onto the tracks woven by my mother’s womb

Listening for the silent pull of what I really love –
the rhythm of my heart beating,
prana moving in my veins,
menses flowing through the birth canal

These blood pulsing prayers,
echoing the numen of our origins –
the sacred womb of all there is.



Photograph By Chris Byrnes

It Casts

By Steve Schoonmaker — *F/V Saulteur*

What's left of the shadows
When Orcas submerge
Or the Sun leaves the sky
Or the Clouds all converge
Is illusion the light
Or the shadows it casts
Is the Sunrise or Sunset
Our future or past
Contained by perceptions
Allowed by the Mind
Function and purpose
Attempt to define
The mental constructions
That Shadows decline
When Here is all Place
And Now is all Time.

One Earth, only now.



Photograph By Steve Schoonmaker;

Mural By Al Martin of Soldotna (1952-2018).

I Remember

By Greg Mans

It all seems years ago.
Another lifetime.
An old man remembering.
And how rich, crisp, and somehow oddly recent.
I can even smell it.

Glacier air in Spring, the silty river water being drawn by my boat.
The fleet on anchor; outgoing tide, Copper River Flats.
Early morning fish splashing along cork line; end of net, low tide slack.
Blue water, cool air, sunshine, and calm seas. Running and looking,
Lifting over soft swells. Setting in funny water and slicks and brown water edge.
The southwest gale. Rain blowing and wind in my face. Cabin wet, Diesel stove trying. Exhaustion.
Finally, behind the bar. Relief.
Smiling faces of tender boat at closure. Tired happy, I give them what I have. Thankful. Thankful.
Six knot idle back. No need to rush, I'm already here.

It has always been more than fish.
Morning walk up Ski Hill or on up to Eyak Ridge.
The green of dwarf spruce against the blue skies; early season blueberries stain my teeth.
On bike, drifting past Fish and Game and along by Theresa's Bakery and Sue's Knives;
Wind in face and hair.
The refresh of cool water as my body enters, Reservoir and Lake Eyak; Summer hot.
Ibec River running clear and cold. Gravel bank stained copper. Warm sun. To-do list ignored.
Boswell Bay; feet bare, cold sand and sunshine.
Sauna at the Cove. Saturday morning. Rain and wind all day.
Late Fall. Cold nights. Crunch of snow underfoot as I step outside my boat cabin to pee;
Northern lights, sky lit green.

The people.
At Post Office or in line at Nichols' Grocery.
Belle on her bike. Bluegrass dancing and the fiddle.
Library on a rainy day.
Swimming pool, early morning crowd.
Bill and his Blackie. Kim and her Fina. Power Creek Road in late morning sun.
Fisherman around the harbor. Dan Nichol's laugh heard two floats over.
End of that big boat float; Bella Donna Bill and Steve on the Saulteur drinking beer and mending gear,
Late afternoon sun.
Baja, beer glass cold, drink ring on table.
Coffee at Theresa's; Gus with aviators, a grin and the night before dragging.
Rubio's yard, mid-summer; hummingbirds and bees and children laughing.
An evening event at Cordova Center, brownies for sale. Big fat snowflakes falling. Streetlights glow.
Substitute teaching at the schools. Such brightness and hope.
Thank you for your trust.

I remember. So, I guess I have known.
And what privilege; what pain.
Smiling still.

Thank you. Keep going for it. Love.

*The rivers that draw us like ribbons draining a glacier,
Intertwining and merging and parting;
Carving itself to the sea.*

Greg Mans



Photograph By David Saiget